

VIII. Colossians
The Preeminence and Prominence of Jesus Christ
“The Preeminence and Prominence of Jesus Christ Applied”
Colossians 3:15–17
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I'd like to start this study by giving a little bit of a recap as to where we have been in our study of Colossians. Typical of the way Paul writes in his epistles, he begins this epistle using approximately the first half of this letter to unpack for us some very deep doctrinal truths that are very rich in theology. His focus in these first two chapters really has been to help establish the all-surpassing greatness and the importance of Jesus Christ. He wants this firmly lodged in our mind so that we understand just how great, how preeminent Jesus Christ truly is.

Beginning in Colossians 3 and in the closing chapters of this epistle, he's moved on now to begin to address the practical implications that those truths have as they are applied to our lives. Specifically, Paul has been pointing to our sanctification, even more specifically to our role and our responsibility in cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the process of our sanctification. He begins Colossians 3 by telling us to seek or to set your mind on things above, rather than on the earthly things for the things in Rome really just clamor for our attention while we live here below. He follows this then, with an apparent increased sense of urgency as he begins to tell us what we are supposed to do. In order to seek the things that are above, we need to put to death those things that are below. In Colossians 3:5, he lets us know what they are. He unpacks them categorically for us. Then he moves on, picking up his pace in Colossians 3:12 by telling us instead of these things put on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you so you must also forgive.

Then it's as if Paul wants to tie it all together with a bow on this process or this formula of sanctification, when he says in Colossians 3:14, *[14] And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.* So now in the verses that we're about to consider together in this study, Paul shares with us what I would call the characteristics or the marks of a Christian's life when Christ is preeminent. There's three truths that I think Paul wants us to see that I want to help highlight for us in this study. The first being is when Jesus has first place our lives are marked by His peace. Second, when Jesus has first place, our lives are saturated with His Word and thirdly, when Jesus has first place, our lives are overwhelmingly thankful.

Let's look now together at God's holy and inspired Word from Colossians 3:15-17 which says, *[15] And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. [16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. [17] And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

This is the first opportunity I've had to step back behind this pulpit to teach and to preach since God called our beloved pastor Harry Reeder home. I couldn't help but think how it might catch me a little bit off guard even to stand up here right now because on Sunday night, one of the things I loved hearing our pastor say was whenever he would start walking through something that was very practical and very helpful to us in the way that we would live our Christians lives, he would say, “I want to just approach this kind of like, you're my small group

Bible study. You're a little bit large for a small group, but I want to do this in a small group setting.”

I'm glad he would do that because as I was studying these three verses over the last several weeks, one of the things that God has wired me for, I guess came to the forefront. I absolutely enjoy when we get to a passage of Scripture and it becomes a fascinating word study. I like looking at the nuance of the words in the original language. I like looking at the context. I like making sure I can unpack and understand what was the author when God, the Holy Spirit inspired this author to write what he wrote, was he saying to that original audience? How would they receive it? How would they understand it? How would they hear it because they understood every one of the original words in the fullness and the depth of their meaning. So I've had a lot of great fun as I've been studying over the last several weeks, preparing for this study. I've debated about whether I feel excited that I only have three verses to cover or do I feel afraid that I only have three verses to cover? The more that I've looked into it, I think I'm a little bit more afraid that I only have three verses to cover and that I won't get done on time but we'll unpack what we can.

Paul begins this in a very interesting way. He starts off with a simple English word 'let.' But there's a lot to that little three letter word. It's much like the word he used back in Colossians 3:2 when he tells us to 'set' your minds on things above, not on things that are on this earth. The word 'let' here in the original language is in the imperative tense. An imperative is something that you have to do. "It's imperative, Johnny, that you clean your room before you go out and play ball." Well, that's a command. So we receive this command from Paul.

When we're given a command, that means there's kind of implicit in this, I think three realities, I guess, for lack of a better word, three realities that we really can ill afford to neglect. The first reality is if he's telling us to do something that means we actually have the ability to do it. So, for example, if we're using Colossians 3:2 as the example to start us off – set your mind on things that are above – I can take this cup of water and choose to set it right here, but I could just as easily choose to set it over there. When we are looking at a command like set or let, we know right there that we have an ability and a responsibility to make a choice. So not only can we choose, but we have the responsibility to choose to act on whatever it is that we're being told to do.

With that ability and that responsibility then also comes accountability. So, as we are being told in Colossians 3:15 to let the Word of Christ dwell on this richly, we know that we can do that. We have the ability. We also know that I should do that. I have the responsibility and one day what I choose to do with the peace of Christ will be judged either by my actions here among you or definitely before the Lord, there is accountability in what I choose to do or not to do. Paul begins this very practical application of the all-surpassing greatness of Jesus by giving us a command – let the peace of Christ rule in your lives. Clearly, there's a choice to make. We can choose either to permit His peace to rule our daily lives, or we can choose to go down some other path, ignoring the peace that's available always to any who seek it. But we don't get to choose the consequences that go with it, either the positive ones or the negative ones.

Before we go any further, we need to understand something else that Paul's talking about here for when he says, 'Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart,' what kind of a peace is he talking about? Peace is actually a fairly common word in our English language. In the New Testament English translations of this word peace, it shows up in our New Testaments over 90 different times so it's easy for us to do a word study in depth.

When we think of peace, for example, in the context of what we even see on the news from day to day, we might be thinking of the war in Ukraine. We might be thinking a cessation of hostilities to an end of the war, for Russia to pull its troops out and for things to be restored to something of a normal so they can begin to rebuild the war-ravaged country as a result of the aggression of Russia. We might even be thinking of relationships with a family member or with a friend. When we think of peace there, maybe we think of the healing of the relationship, the restoring of the relationship, no longer being at odds with someone that we care about deeply.

I think even more than this, Paul wants us to see that this peace of Christ surpasses just what we see on the surface. In order for us to grasp the broader meaning of peace we need to contextualize this as though we were hearing it with understanding from Paul himself. This is no ordinary or man generated peace that Paul is talking about rather, it's not even a feigned peace or a fabricated peace, something that we just pretend exists in order to get by for the moment where we try to appease the situation by trying to have peace at any cost. Even the prophets as long ago as Jeremiah warned about this, when he said there will be many of those who will proclaim peace, peace when there is no peace (Jeremiah 8:11) and maybe they proclaim peace, peace, trying to establish a feeling of peace so that they can still accomplish their end, their aim, whatever it is that they were trying to get by decrying peace when it was not there.

This peace that Paul calls us to Colossians 3:15 is the peace of Christ and that tells me right away it's divine in origin and is completely other in its scope. The origin is from Christ Himself. I like that he uses the word Christ here. We know Christ to mean the title Jesus Christ, the Lord. Christ is the Messiah, the Anointed One. To the Jews of Paul's Day that had deep implication and meaning for to talk about the Christ was to talk about the long-awaited Messiah. Now, to call Jesus the Christ was a sticking point for most of the Jews, But Christ the Messiah, the long-awaited Messiah is offering us His peace.

Divine in origin, Jesus Himself assures us of that in John 14:27 which says *[27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* Jesus goes on to say in John 16:33, *[33] I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.* The peace of Christ or peace that Jesus freely gives to all of those who by faith, avail themselves to it, far surpasses any human comprehension. It's that peace that passes all understanding. It is known by those who are facing some sort of an ongoing struggle or strife now see that that issue resolved and the conflict disappears. We understand and we appreciate peace like that, don't we? Whether it's a medical crisis or a relational crisis or some other crisis, whenever we are in conflict and then suddenly, we realize the conflict has ceased – peace is here – that is one aspect of the peace that God gives us through His Son Jesus Christ.

There's another aspect of the peace of Christ that is what I've been wrestling with the majority of my time starting over the past month or so on this passage and that peace is peace in the middle of the conflict that doesn't go away. That kind in prolonged illness where we pray in faith believing maybe we even have an anointing and we're there with and we're for you and we're still fighting the battle alongside of you, but it's relentless. Or that strained relationship, either at home or in the workplace or even in a church dynamic is still there and no matter how much you work to try to bring peace to the situation, it stays the same.

What does the peace of Christ look like in that context? For me, what the peace of Christ has been looking like in that context is that He's giving peace internally to me. Circumstances haven't changed, but my heart has changed and maybe that's what He was after all along. When

He changes my heart, I can find peace in the circumstance, peace in the middle of the storm. I remember the old gospel song that says sometimes He calms the storm and other times He just speaks peace into His child. We can have the peace of Christ regardless of what's going on around us. We have the peace of Christ available to us always, no matter what it is that we're facing.

This is the peace of Christ that John Huss experienced in July of 1415. Having been declared a heretic and an arch enemy of the church, John Huss was condemned to die. He was to be burned at the stake. They chained him by his neck to the stake. He kisses the chains and then prays out loud, "Lord Jesus, I patiently endure this cruel death" but he didn't always say that for he went on to say, "And Lord, forgive my executioner." There is a peace that passes all understanding, so much so that even 100 years later, that same peace of John Huss would become alive one more time because there was another monk in that same area. His name was Martin Luther and Martin Luther would quote something else that Huss said at that moment when Huss was dying – he said something to the effect that Luther quotes 'You may roast the goose (Huss means goose) but 100 years from now, will a swan arise whose singing you will not be able to silence.' Huss's voice had long since been silenced. It was 100 years from that moment until the moment that Luther nailed 95 theses on the church door of Wittenberg and the beginning of the full Reformation would start.

As John Piper has rightly said, "Truly the swans proclaiming the truth of the Gospel could not be silenced." Believers can experience peace regardless of their circumstances. Why? It is because the peace of Christ was wrought at great price. The peace that we experience begins with the peace that we only know through Christ as He makes us at peace with God the Father, unless and until we come to Jesus Christ in saving faith, there is no peace. Oh, we can fake it and we can enjoy some measures of peace on the surface but there's no true peace because until we're right with God, we know no peace. However, because of the Son, the work that He did and the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross and won for us peace with God now and forevermore. It's based on that same peace now that we can now see peace in us bringing an end to hostilities between brother and brother, between husband and wife, or to any number of any other types of relationships that are strained as believers choose to let the peace of Christ redirect the trajectory of their lives. Remember, we have a choice. We can choose it over here, or we can choose it over here. We can let the peace of Christ rule in our lives.

What does he mean by rule? I like that word. I think of an umpire in baseball who might call something a ball or a strike and you might disagree with whatever he called, but the bottom line was when he made his ruling, it stood because the umpire in that game has the final word. So, if you were called out, you were out. If you were called, safe, you were safe, and that's the exact same connotation of the word 'rule' here in this passage. Literally in the Greek, it would point us to the Olympic type games that they would have and the judges who would rule in the competition and their ruling would stand.

So, what's Paul telling us? 'Let,' choose, you make the choice deliberately that the peace of Christ to rule, to have the final say in what's going on in your life, and in what's going on in your relationships. Paul says 'Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.' The heart is the center of our emotions. The heart is the center of our thinking. Out of the heart, the abundance of the mouth speaks. So, we know that it is deep seated within us. Paul is telling us to let the peace of Christ rule, umpire, have the final word as deep in your inner soul and your inner being as it possibly can. It's a pretty tall order to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

Not only must you do this as a Christian, as a command, but Paul tells us why in Colossians 3:15; *[15] And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.* Now he is pointing not only beyond the ability that we have to choose to let it rule or not to let it rule, but you have the responsibility. Indeed, this is your calling. That's your Divine responsibility. Just like Paul would identify himself as called of God to be an apostle, the apostle to the Gentiles in due season. Paul had a calling. We each as Christians have a calling. What's our calling? It is to let the peace of Christ rule – have the final say in our life.

How do we let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, to which indeed that's our calling in the body of Christ? I believe it starts with us becoming unified. When the peace of Christ is ruling, when Jesus' agenda has the final say in what we're doing, it creates unity. Let it rule, let it umpire, let it have the final say. Over the last several weeks when situations got stressful in my life, I would have to go immediately to Him and say, "Jesus, what would Your peace look like here? Jesus, how do I actually magnify the peace of Christ in this situation?" I learned a couple of practical things. Sometimes exalting the peace of Christ means dying to yourself. You may think you have the right. Many times, I thought I had the right to stand up for myself, to speak for myself, to clearly defend myself and Jesus said, 'Is that letting my peace rule?' I found that the more often I would practice dying to myself and choosing the peace of Christ to rule it was making a difference in the dynamic of the relationship that I was having to struggle. In many different ways that's exactly what he is calling us to.

Paul also says we're accountable. We're accountable to let Him rule. We each individually, as well as all of us collectively, are given this responsibility to choose peace in the face of conflict, regardless of what others choose to do. Doesn't that make you a doormat? Does that mean I let people just walk all over me and do whatever they want? It might. Jesus chose the peace of Christ. He chose the peace of God, and it looked like He had become a doormat as He was hung on the cross but He rose from the grave. He chose the better route. He chose the more desirable and the peace of God in Christ ruled.

I think John Calvin understood the priority of this task of letting the peace of Christ rule. Calvin puts in the right perspective simply by saying "we cannot be in a state of agreement with God otherwise than by being unified among ourselves as members of one body." This leads, I think, to a very logical question – how can we fulfill this Divinely given responsibility to have peace ruling/reigning for it's a calling that we're all supposed to collectively pick up and shoulder together, in ways that reveal that we are increasingly experiencing His peace?

I think Paul gives us the right answer as he adds a second command for us to obey. When Jesus has first place in our lives, our lives are saturated by His Word. Colossians 3:16 says *[16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.* Again, we start with that word – let which means allow, choose, direct, deliberately choose or permit another reality to consistently mark your life. That reality is the saturation point of God's Word. God's Word is meant to be something more than just an occasional guest in and out of the homes of our lives.

Think about company that's coming to stay with you and you're sort of looking forward to it and you're sort of not and you kind of grudgingly say, "yeah, come on over" and the moment they get there, you're all happy, happy, happy but soon you're just like, "Man, when are they going to leave?" Unfortunately, I'm afraid that is way too often we can treat God's Word. We want to let it in a little bit. We want to let it have a nook or cranny of our lives. When Paul says,

'Let the Word of God dwell in you richly' he is calling us to have an open door policy. When His Word dwells in us, it completely fills every aspect of our lives. Let it dwell abundantly for it has to permeate every aspect of who we are and what we're doing. God's thinking becomes our thinking. His way becomes our way because we simply have saturated our minds and our hearts in the Word of Christ. It's dwelling, it's residing, It's actually not just residing, it is the master of our lives. It's taking control.

Unfortunately, when we only partially let the Word of God come and go, it only partially reigns in our lives and we end up in all kinds of conflict and the peace of Christ is broken. So if we're struggling and we don't see the peace of Christ as in our lives, perhaps we need to look first about how much is the Word of God dwelling in my life right now? Am I fully saturating my life with God's thinking? I'm just going to say this by way of a personal testimony. This is not descriptive of something you need to go out and do beginning tomorrow. It's not prescriptive. It just describes what God has put on my heart and what I've been doing for the last roughly three years. I have been reading five Psalms a day and by doing that you can read the entirety of the Book of Psalms in a month. God just put it on my heart that I needed to be soaked in the Psalms so I've been reading the Psalms once a month each month for going on three years.

You could try to put me on the spot right now and ask me to quote me a particular verse in the Psalm and I'll look at you like I have no clue at all because somehow my mind struggles there. But I do know the truths of the Psalms have become mine. I actually have a sheet that I will never share with you, but it's simply titled "My Psalms" because they come alive, because I see them and I feel them welling up within me coming out of me. The truth of those Psalms are influencing the relationships I have with others. I think that's what saturation does.

When the ground gets saturated, and it can't take in anything more. You get a sponge, it's saturated. You can't take in any more water until you squeeze some out. When the Word of God saturates our lives, it wells up within and it can't help but overflow. It's going to overflow into the relationships that you have at home, at the workplace, every dynamic that you could possibly think of, the ball field, it's going to overflow and it's going to supersede if it's truly saturating our lives. I think Paul is telling us if we want the peace of Christ ruling, then the Word of Christ has to dwell. It has to inhabit, it has to take up residence in us, not feebly, but completely, abundantly richly.

I like that Paul doesn't just say 'do it' but he gives us a reason to do it, by teaching and admonishing one another. That's getting a little stickier, isn't it? Because that sounds like I have some responsibility to you and you have some responsibility to me. I am to know God's Word so adequately that when your heart's breaking and you're grieving, or when you're rejoicing over some success that God has given you, I should be equipped to be able to speak Biblical truth, even if I can't give you the chapter and verse and be a walking concordance, I can speak the truth in love into your heart as the Holy Spirit uses me in such a way that it encourages you and lifts you up. I'm to teach you not because I'm a pastor, but because I'm a Christian. You are to teach me because you're a brother or sister in Christ. You are to be so saturated with me in God's Word that we can freely speak God's Word into each other's lives 24 seven in such a way that it lifts us up, it encourages us, it carries us over the hump, whatever it is that we need, up to and including even giving words of exhortation.

One brother I have who I appreciate most, exhorted me, he called me out with God's Word and by God's grace, I took it to heart and it changed the path and the direction I was going. That's how we should be. We should be bold enough to let the Holy Spirit use us that if we love each other deeply enough – remember above all these put on love – if we are really loving one

another, if we are seeking the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit collectively in us, then I have to care about you enough to teach and admonish. I would hope that you would care enough about me to do the same because I still have a lot to learn and a lot that God's working on to correct in my life.

So let the Word of Christ dwell in your richly teaching and admonishing but then Paul gives some practical helps – teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, (how?) singing songs, hymns and spiritual songs with thanksgiving in your hearts to God (Colossians 3:16). I love this verse. Paul loved it so much that he had to say this not here only, but also in Ephesians 5:19 – speaking to one another in Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sometimes a pastor will repeat himself again and again to make sure you heard what he was saying but that's not what Paul's doing here. These words have distinction. They have difference, they have meaning, they have purpose. The Psalms, we would know as the Psalter. It's the oldest hymn book that there is still in existence today. It was what the Hebrew sang regularly. The beauty of knowing the Psalms is you can now put them to music. I love great settings, new contemporary settings of the old Psalms. Why? Because then they stay in my mind. They go with me.

Most know about the power of music – how it sticks with you. Do you ever have one of those songs where you wake up in the morning and it's just pounding in your head and you say, 'Where did that come from? I can't get rid of it.' It's the power of music. There is power in music when you put Scripture to it. What a blessing. When we sing songs in church were sometimes singing literally Psalms, and we're also singing other passages of Scripture set to good music so that instills deeply within us. We also sing hymns which are those songs of praise in which we exalt and exalt in our Lord Jesus Christ and God Almighty. We tell Him how great He as we sing the psalms. Then there are the songs of praise. That's where we might stand up here and sing about what God has done in my life in such a way that it points to Him. There's a richness and a fullness of this type of music in this type of worship in this type of building each other up.

Martin Luther knew the greatness of hymns and music when he penned the hymn *A Mighty Fortress is our God*. And he picked a tune that everybody knew. Charles Wesley knew it when he wrote the hymn *And Can It Be* that I should gain an interest in my Savior's blood? The Gettys know it. What is our hope in life and death? The Getty's wrote the hymn *Christ Alone*. For any of us that have memory challenges, trying to memorize Scripture passages by verse, when you set it to music, it tends to go deep into your heart and life and it stays there. When's the last time you sang, *Jesus Loves Me, This I know*. Yes, it still stays – incredible truths deep within our souls. Paul wants that. He wants the peace of Christ to reign, to rule in our lives. He wants the Word of Christ to dwell richly, which is why he says, 'do it with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with wisdom, and with Thanksgiving in your hearts to God.'

Then he goes on as we get to the third and final of the character marks, I believe, of a Christian whose life is really given over to the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:17 says [17] *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him*. When Jesus has first place in our lives, not only does the peace of Christ reign/rule and the Word of Christ dwells richly, but our lives become marked by thanksgiving.

I love our Thanksgiving services. Those are services where we get to hear from many in our congregation about what they are thankful for and the blessings that God has done in their lives. Every day ought to be one of those services for we are to be saturated with thanksgiving. Paul is wrapping it all together. He's saying in case he has left something out from the previous verses, whatever you do, do all. He said it to those in Corinth in I Corinthians 10:31, [31] *So,*

whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Peter echoes the same truth in I Peter 4:11 when he says, *[11] whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.* Our Westminster divines, they put it to us first. What is the chief of man? The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Everything we do in the workplace, in our homes, on the ball field or in the classroom, or whether we're driving or flying or sitting in an airport fuming over the fact that yet another flight is delayed or canceled because of whatever – everything that we do is supposed to be done in agreement with who Christ is and what He has done for us. That means everything we say in public, in our homes, out loud, everything we say in that silent conversation that seems to be unending in our heads – these too should conform to what God has revealed about Himself through Jesus Christ, His Son. According to Colossians 3:17 we are to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Why? Because He's Lord of all and He's Lord in all. He laid down His life to have a rightful claim over us, and we received a gift of belonging to Him.

Thanksgiving is simply an act of acknowledging that something has been given to me that I didn't deserve and therefore I am grateful. Paul thinks so much of this last aspect of thankfulness that it is mentioned in each of the three verses we have looked at in this study. Colossians 3:15 tells us to **be thankful**. Colossians 3:16 says **with thankfulness** in your hearts to God and Colossians 3:17 says **giving thanks** to God the Father through Him. Why does he hit gratitude so hard? Could it be that a lack of gratitude might be one of the greatest enemies to our sanctification? Could it be that an unthankful spirit robs us of the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts? Could it be that an ungrateful heart is indicative of a heart that is not saturated with God's Word?

Paul calls us out in this. He says, 'What do you have that you haven't received?' The answer implied 'nothing.' The greatest gift of all that we received is salvation, something we didn't deserve but the opposite of a grateful heart is a selfish heart. A selfish heart is entitled – God, I deserve this. God, I deserve that to and God, I don't deserve what You're giving me. Give me something better. That's the grumbling spirit of a non-thankful heart. Give thanks in everything. Give thanks for everything. That means the good things that we think are good and those things that we think are not so good.

You might be thinking, 'How can I give thanks for trials and tribulations? How do I give thanks for the fact that the cancer is still here and it hasn't gone away and it's getting worse and worse by the day. How can I give thanks?' When we look to what God has given us instead of to the circumstances surrounding us, we find plenty for which to be thankful for. In adversity and under trials I can choose again. I can choose where I'm going to set my affections, where my mind's going to be, what I'm going to think about, what I'm going to look at. I can choose to focus on God Almighty and He gave me something I would never deserve – everlasting life. He gave me a wife that loves me and that's no small order. He gave me kid that love Him and serve Him and grandkids that are learning the same thing. He gave me each and every one of you to rub shoulders with, to bump along in this life, to encourage, to be encouraged by. How can I not be thankful? How can I stop being thankful for what God has freely given? But if I get selfish, if I get self-centered, if I get myopic and start looking at me, me, me, me, I quickly will forget what I'm supposed to be thankful for out there with you.

Paul has brought us through this. He's tied it all together for us. He's let us know that the Word of Christ is to rule, which means He has the final say. I should be living to promote the

peace of Christ, not the agenda of myself or anyone else. He's also told me that the Word of Christ is to dwell richly in me, it should be saturating me so that naturally what flows out of me is sounding more and more like my Savior than anything else and I'm to be thankful.

Our takeaway for this study is simply this; when Jesus has first place in our lives, His peace, His Word and heartfelt gratitude are the overarching traits that will be seen in our daily living. The question for us today is, how true is this of you? Do you know His peace? Are you letting it rule, have the final say, or do you insist on getting the last word yourself? Are you spending so much time in His Word on your own and at church? What I love about Sunday night is that we get to end the day the same way we started it – deep in His Word. I need that. I need to be fed more than once a day. I need the collective worship, the corporate worship of the body of Christ, to go into the King of Kings. Are saturating yourself in God's Word, and for what, can you be, and should you be thankful? Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, please help us because in our fallen humanity, it's so easy for us to lose track of the eternal, to set our sights on something lower than the essential. It's so easy for us, Lord, just to get caught up into what I want and what I think rather than Lord, what Your will is. Teach us, Lord, to live saying 'Not my will, but Yours always be done.' Teach us, Lord, to live in ways we put others first, we follow Your Word and we seek the peace of Christ in all of our relationships and the dynamics of whether they're at home, at work or school or wherever we are. Then Lord, let us be students of Your Word. Help us to saturate our hearts in our lives in Your Word that our minds will be captivated by the Word of God in Christ Jesus. Then, Lord, show us all for which we have to be thankful and will praise You in Jesus' Name, Amen.